



The Miracle Of Prayer

by David J. Stewart

It is disturbing to find so many people that fail to believe God answers prayer. Several top "authors" and so-called "professionals" being interviewed on TV lately, have claimed that prayer is a great therapy (as an end in itself). You never hear them mention God. It is sad that prayer has been diminished to the status of going to the park to watch the birds. Prayer is not effective because it is a good therapy. Prayer is effective because there is an omnipotent (all powerful) God up in heaven that hears and answers prayer!

Answered prayer can only happen by a miracle of God. A "Miracle" is defined in the *Random House College Dictionary* as "an event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers and is ascribed to a divine or supernatural cause." In other words, **GOD DID IT!** Everything God does then is a miracle because His power is divine, not human or natural. When we pray, we are petitioning the Creator of the universe for a miracle. If God decides to grant our request (s), it can be nothing less than a divine miracle performed by an Almighty God.

Prayer is not to be taken lightly because God just may give you what you ask. I remember an older country song by Garth Brooks, "*I thank God for unanswered prayer.*" He had been praying, as a youngster, for God to give him a certain girl to be his wife. God didn't answer his request. He sees this same woman many years later and then thanks God that his prayers were never answered! So be careful what you pray!!! Let's move on.

Jesus never preached an all night sermon, but he prayed all night! Luke 6:12 says concerning Jesus "**He went out into a mountain to pray, and CONTINUED ALL NIGHT IN PRAYER to God.**" Have you ever started praying and just couldn't stop?, or started studying your Bible and simply couldn't put it down? The Bible says Jesus "continued." He simply started praying

and kept on praying until His heart was content. He was caught up in His fellowship with the Father. We should get caught up too!

Daniel was also a man of prayer! "...he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he KNEELED UPON HIS KNEES THREE TIMES A DAY, AND PRAYED, and GAVE THANKS before his God, AS HE DID AFORETIME" (Daniel 6:10). Daniel had a prayer life. He was about 80 years old now and kept his windows open toward Jerusalem (about 500 miles away) because that's where his heart was. Jerusalem was his home town. He had been taken into Babylonian captivity as a young lad and longed to be back with his own people again, in the city of his God. We too, are pilgrims passing through this old dark world, and we should open the windows of our heart in prayer towards heaven (home). Daniel prayed morning, evening and afternoon!

"Elijah was A MAN SUBJECT TO LIKE PASSIONS AS WE ARE, and HE PRAYED EARNESTLY THAT IT MIGHT NOT RAIN: and IT RAINED NOT on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (James 5:17). What a wonderful truth! Elijah was just a plain, common, everyday human being just like you and me; yet he obtained an answer to his prayer for something VERY BIG! That's exactly why God is telling us about it, so we will be encouraged to do the same. Even more wonderful is that God is telling us this in relation to physical illnesses and healing. "...PRAY ONE FOR ANOTHER, THAT YE MAY BE HEALED. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous (saved) man availeth (accomplishes) much. "Effectual" and "fervent" are words meaning "energy." In other words, you simply mean business and are sincerely pouring your heart out to God the best you know how for a miracle. "...the PRAYER OF FAITH SHALL SAVE THE SICK... (James 5:15). We need to pray and have "just enough faith" to simply keep praying! It matters not where the faith comes from: a child, someone at church, mom, dad (faith is faith). More than likely it was the elders of the church who had the faith, but not necessarily. Jesus heals the sick (Matthew 8:16,17). He's alive today! Go to Jesus in prayer now.

Now here's a heart warming truth in Acts 12:1-16. Wicked king Herod had just killed James the Apostle "with the sword", probably by beheading. Herod saw that "it pleased the Jews." The Jews were a wicked, rebellious people and had hated Christ; they demanded that the Roman government crucify Jesus, and they did! Steven was brutally murdered by the Jews in Acts 7:54-60. So Jesus, Steven and James had already been slain by the Jews. Herod now had Peter bound in prison and looked forward to killing him. "...but PRAYER WAS MADE WITHOUT CEASING of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5). Guess what? A miracle happened! God answered their prayers and sent an angel to rescue Peter—divine power at work! After Peter was freed, the angel departed. Now Peter comes to the house where everybody was still praying for him (vs. 12). He knocks on the

door and Rhoda asks who it is. When she heard Peter's voice, she was so happy that she ran to tell the others and forgot to open the door! They told Rhoda "**THOU ART MAD.**" Your nuts! Crazy! Peter continued knocking! The Bible says when all those who had been praying opened the door, "**THEY WERE ASTONISHED**" (vs. 16). "Astonished" means "to put out of wits." In other words, their minds were blown! Here's the beauty of this truth— even though these many believers didn't have much faith, God still answered their prayers. They had so little faith that when God did answer their prayers, **THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE IT!** Wow! What an encouragement to pray! Praying is faith in itself! If you have **JUST ENOUGH FAITH** to pray (ask) God for something, that's all the faith God requires. What a Savior! Do you have doubts? Did you know that the more doubt you have, the greater is your faith—as long as you act on the faith! Faith is believing, in spite of the doubts. No matter how much you may doubt that God will answer your prayers, if you simply ask—that's all the faith needed for your prayer to be answered! Likewise, all the faith you need to become a born-again believer is **JUST ENOUGH**. If you have "just enough" faith to "**call upon the name of the Lord**" (Romans 10:13), you will be saved. "Call" means "to rely upon." Won't you make that decision now to "rely" 100% upon Jesus Christ as your Savior? Admit to God you're a sinner, deserving of hell. Ask Jesus to forgive your sins and take you to heaven when you die. Let God work the miracle of salvation in your soul now.

Kindest regards, David